

ARRTC

One Stop Shop for Reserves

By CSM Jack Rucynski

Good training is a vital ingredient in the professional development of today's NCO. For the Reserve soldier, much of this training, particularly MOS-producing and NCOES courses, is provided by Reserve Component schools and academies. However, significant skills and knowledge, which are needed to maintain Army Reserve units during peacetime mobilization preparation, cannot be provided by these traditional institutions.

This gap is filled by the Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, or ARRTC, at Fort McCoy, Wis. Established in 1975 as the Army Reserve Technician Training Center, it provided standardized training to dual-status unit technicians. It taught critical administrative, logistical, financial and training skills required for day-to-day maintenance of Reserve units. In 1981, it was directed to provide pre-mobilization training for a rapidly expanding Army Guard and Reserve (AGR) workforce. By 1982, ARRTC nearly tripled its curriculum as it provided duty-related functional courses to all full-time support members of the Reserves.

Today, ARRTC maintains its role as a one-stop shop for full-time support personnel who serve the Reserves. AGR soldiers receive initial orientation and in-processing through a two-week Full Time Support Entry Course. Later, they, along with civilians and active duty soldiers who also provide full-time support, can receive specialized training in functional areas.

Active duty soldiers — primarily those assigned to readiness groups — have taken advantage of ARRTC courses in order to provide timely guidance to Reserve units they serve. ARRTC courses are also open to drilling Reserve soldiers.

The center's Decentralized Training Division provides tailored, on-location refresher training and workshops for Reserve commands. In the past year, more than 5,500 soldiers received non-resident training. Of particular interest to senior NCOs are the first sergeant and command

sergeants major workshops.

ARRTC develops its courses from surveys of Reserve commands and from subjects recommended by Forces Command. Surveys of students and their supervisors allow the center to be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of individuals and units.

The center has added several courses in

Reserve readiness 50 years ago

- 1940: The Reserves numbered about 120,000, including 117,000 officers.
- June 1940: 2,710 Reserve officers were on active duty.
- May 1941: More than 46,000 Reservists were on active duty.
- Dec. 1941: More than 80,000 Reservists were on active duty.
- Pre-World War II era: The Organized Reserves (with separate officer and enlisted corps) included 33 divisions — on paper.
- July 1934: A summer camp photograph of the 61st Battalion, 100th Infantry Division, shows just 32 members — all officers.
- 1940: 30 percent of Reserve soldiers trained (when there was no pay for periodic drills).
- 1934: Only 14 percent of Reserve soldiers trained.
- 1940-1941: Reservists were called to active duty as individuals, stripping units of even their cadres. When divisions were mobilized, they had to be completely rebuilt.

Army Reserve Personnel Center
(Based on the book *Twice the Citizen, A History of the U.S. Army Reserve, 1908-1983.*)

recent years. The Unit Movement Officer Course — open to NCOs who are staff sergeants or higher — certifies graduates to assist unit movements during mobilization. The Unit Mobilization Planner's Course trains soldiers to quickly transition Reserve units from peacetime to wartime.

In 1988, the Reserve Retention School moved from Fort Harrison, Ind., to McCoy, and ARRTC has developed additional courses to train retention skills for all Reserve unit levels. Recently, a new course targeted to first-line leaders called STAMP (Skills, Techniques and Attrition Management Program) was added to emphasize supervisory involvement in the retention process.

Future requirements will lead to more course innovations. For example, ARRTC is developing an Active Component Orientation Course designed to help active duty soldiers understand the unique functions and roles of Reserve units. Lessons learned from Desert Shield and Desert Storm might lead to developing new mobilization planning courses. And Total Quality Management principles and concepts will influence ARRTC courses in order to help Reserve units promote greater cohesion and effectiveness.

In July, ARRTC will begin classes in a new \$11 million facility that features modern training technology in 25 classrooms. A year later, construction is scheduled to begin on new billets for 450 students.

ARRTC plays a key role in the professional self-development of any NCO who helps support the Reserves. While completion of the center's courses are not directly tied to promotion, they will become increasingly important to the modern NCO. Units cannot succeed without NCOs who understand their roles in maintaining unit effectiveness; this includes the Army Reserve.

ARRTC will continue to play an important role in making sure that the Reserves — and its NCO Corps — are prepared for today and tomorrow.

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